



Provincial Outreach Program for the Early Years

Supporting Playful Literacy Learning Through Story Workshop

Wednesday, February 7th

3:15 – 4:15 pm

Connect with us online!



@POPEYBC



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Presenter:

Lisa Thomas
POPEY Program Manager



Our learning objectives

In this hour, POPEY will share strategies, resources, and ideas to incorporate Story Workshop into your K–3 literacy block, including how we can use loose parts and provocations to:

- nurture curiosity, joy, experimentation, and storytelling
- honour student voice and choice

Checking in - you and story workshop

How would you describe your prior experience and comfort level with Story Workshop?

1. Haven't tried it yet
2. Have tried it a bit
3. Feel pretty comfortable with it
4. Feel very comfortable with it

What is Story Workshop?

Story Workshop **invites** children to **show** and to **tell** us what **makes sense** to them

- ✓ it is grounded in the stories children bring to school – real and imagined
- ✓ it encourages writing from those stories
- ✓ it supports children to develop an authentic relationship between their experiences and the way they choose to create and tell stories about them
- ✓ these tellings, in a variety of forms, nurture listening
- ✓ the reciprocity of storytelling and listening allows students to know themselves and each other better
- ✓ students learn that stories help us find each other, and that writing is a powerful tool for connection

Grade 1 Students on Story Workshop

“I like doing lots of things like making cool stories and getting to write and draw, it’s fun” – Taylor

“I like to build stories with my hands” – Luke

“It’s fun to make stories with friends, they help make my story better” – Maeve

“Because you already have a picture it helps you write.” – Ryan

“Well you make stories with different materials, it helps you to write stories because it gives your brain ideas.” – William



Story making is world making

What **three words** do **you** feel are most important when it comes to supporting your students as **story tellers** and **world makers**?

Equity	Inventiveness	Meaning making	Creativity
Voice	Innovation	Emotional literacy	Generosity
Agency	Problem solving	Compassion	Hope
Empathy	Leadership	Humour	Care
Collaboration	Engagement	Interdependence	Power
Listening	Vision	Perspective taking	Uncertainty
Imagination	Trust	Community	Reading
Inquiry	Play	Connection	Writing
Curiosity	Art	Flexibility	Self-efficacy

Share your three words in the Chat Box when the music ends.

Loose Parts as Provocations in Story Workshop



When children interact with loose parts, they enter a world of “**what if**” that promotes the type of **thinking** that leads to **problem solving** and **theoretical reasoning**. Loose parts **enhance** children’s ability to **think imaginatively** and see **solutions**, and they bring a sense of **adventure** and **excitement** to children’s play.

–Daly & Beloglovsky in
Loose Parts: Inspiring Play in Young Children

The Value of Loose Parts

- ✓ promote active learning
- ✓ deepen critical thinking
- ✓ promote divergent and creative thinking
- ✓ support developmental domains –
 - ★ physical development
 - ★ social–emotional development
 - ★ cognitive development
- ✓ are developmentally inclusive
- ✓ promote a wide range of play –
 - ★ functional play
 - ★ constructive play
 - ★ dramatic and symbolic play
- ✓ are sustainable and economically feasible
- ✓ support the curriculum –
 - ★ math, language/literacy, science, art, dramatic and symbolic play, sensory exploration, movement and music

The Power of Questions

Story workshop is a structure and approach that supports language and literacy development. Adults work alongside children as they explore prepared environments and experiences and share stories.

Together with our students, we wonder..

Where do stories live?

What stories do I want the world to hear?

What stories do I need to tell?

How do stories influence me and our community?

How do my stories become part of my community, and how do the stories of others in my community become a part of me?

The Five Elements of Story Workshop

Preparation

organizing materials and environments specifically designed to support both the children's story creation and the teacher's research

Provocation

the whole-group session that begins each story workshop, including a proposal the teacher introduces to the children to engage, sustain, and extend their interests and curiosity

Invitation and negotiation

is the transition between provocation and creation; intended to support each child with a plan to get started

Story creation

makes up the bulk of a session of story workshop; a time for using the arts and play as well as writing to make meaning, to imagine, to create, and to share stories

Story sharing

brings closure to story workshop each day, and is a time for building community through story and reflection

Preparation

There are two kinds of preparation:

1. Setting intentions and documenting

Getting ourselves ready to LISTEN to children, meet them where they are, and learn alongside them

2. The physical space

Organizing a physical environment that supports research, relationship, and the construction of meaningful language and literacy.

“We are preparing ourselves for stories”

Writing Workshop Connection

interesting paper, journals, good writing materials, staplers, tape, interesting office supplies, stapled blank books, clipboards, alphabet charts, personal dictionaries, folders...

Provocation

Invite children to play with ideas

- offering a proposal to children to engage, sustain, and extend their interests and curiosity as they begin the workshop
- like mini-lessons in writers' workshop – they both ready the children to use their independent time constructively
- a kind of prediction that a teacher makes – a hunch about what will spark and sustain children's curiosity

It's like a game of ball toss between teacher and children.

Example & Context:

longer term learning goal: becoming more familiar with literary nonfiction in order to inspire students' own writing

smaller goal: exploring the topic of forests

Possible question stems and formats

- What can we learn about _____ ?
- How can you use _____ to _____ ?
(material) (explore, capture, imagine) (idea, question, experience)
 - How can you use watercolour to imagine where stories come from?
 - How can you use clay to capture your reflections on today's discussion?
- What stories can you find in _____ ?
(material)

Reflection Questions

- What did you notice? What did you wonder?
- What did you learn about the original question?
- How did using these materials help to deepen your thinking?

Invitation & Negotiation

Overview & Expectations

- giving a daily overview of the materials available
- the teacher and students make agreements about where each child will get started and spend their time during story creation
- the teachers check in, listen, nudge, encourage, and hold children accountable each day
- the child and their work meets up with the teacher and their research, in genuine relationship and authentic inquiry

It's a moment to play with each child individually

Writing Workshop Connection:

transitioning to independent work teachers take care to help children focus as they head to work; children may be asked to state an intention before they head to work

What invitation and negotiation sounds like

- What's your plan? What are you working on?
- Where will you find your story?
- What part of your story are you working on?
- What materials are you going to use? What tools do you need?
- You used blocks yesterday and got stuck. What new material might help you get unstuck today?
- How will you capture your story?
- Would you like to start by telling a friend what you've got so far?
- What are you struggling with and how can I help you?
- What will you do if you get stuck?

Story Creation

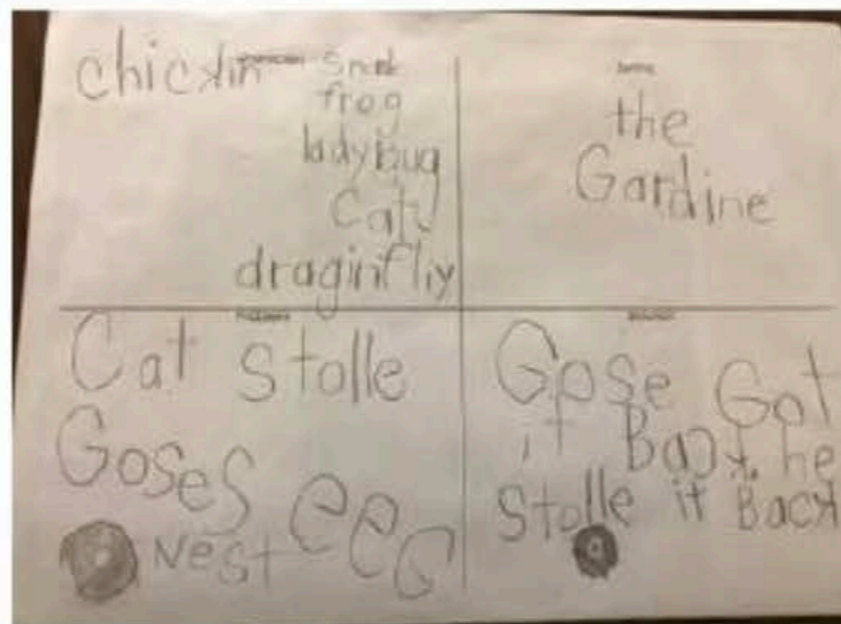
Independent work time devoted to using the arts, play, and writing to make meaning

- children play with materials (including art media), talk to each other, and tell and write stories
- teachers work with small groups and individuals, as they explore patterns, connections, and relationships through the arts and play
- young authors construct and share meaning – to make sense of their relationship to the world through story

Teachers create the conditions that promote 'relaxed alertness'

Writing Workshop Connection:

teachers use children's own writing to teach writing skills and strategies; children are invited to write like readers and read like writers; children gain important skills through writing and then reading their own words



The Garden By Kate

Once there was a garden. One night in the garden there was 1 chicken, 1 cat, 1 snake, 1 frog, 1 lady bug, 1 dragon fly. The cat stole the chicken's egg and chicken stole it back.

Supporting Children Through Story Creation

When talking with children about their stories,
use supportive language...

- Can you tell me more about...?
- I notice...
- That reminds me of...
- Your story makes me feel...
- I wonder... (where that idea came from, what will happen next, how that character felt)
- What would you like to do next?
- How do you plan to capture that story?
- What tools do you need?
- I look forward to hearing more!

Using Documentation to Inform Practice

Consider Intentions: What is your learning intention? What materials will you need? What provocations will you use? What will you invite the children to do?

Prepare: What do you want to gather more information about? What tools will you need? How will you position yourself to observe with an open mind?

Observe: Capture through notes, writing down children's dialogue, take photographs to support your memory.

Interpret & Speculate: What do you notice? What patterns do you see? What evidence do you see that supports your interpretation. What surprises or confuses you?

What documentation tools work for you?
What can support story workshop for you?

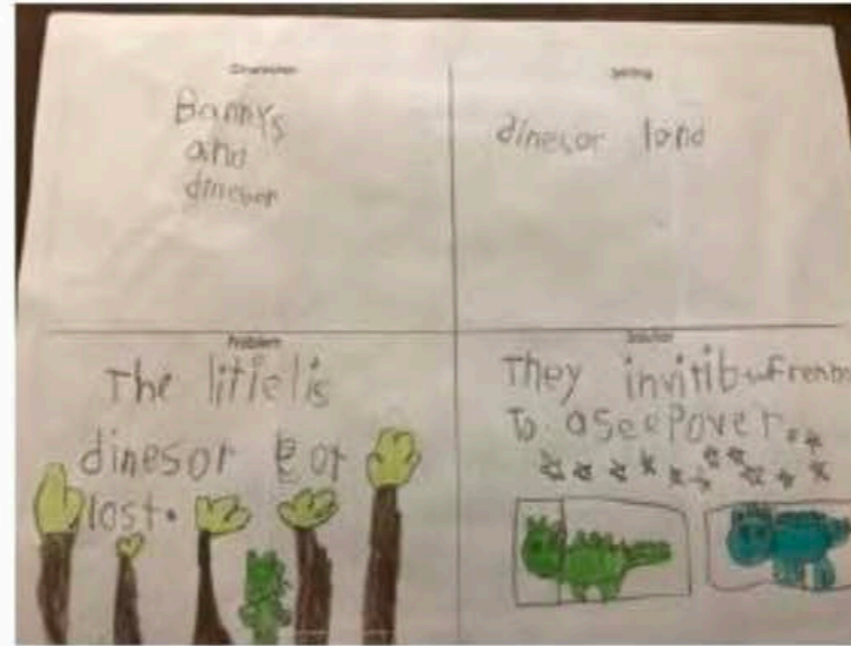
Story Sharing

Each session of story workshop ends with a whole-group reflection on the work that happened during story creation

- it's a time for zooming in, paying attention, listening, and making connections
- it's a journey to explore the territory of understanding, imagination, curiosity, and empathy

Writing Workshop Connection: Author's Chair

one child sharing a piece of writing, sometimes to get feedback from peers (compliments, questions, or suggestions); or a few children are asked to share what they tried in their own writing; or small groups or pairs share with each other from their ongoing work



The First Day the Dinosaurs and the Bunnies Raced By Margo

One beautiful sunny morning the dinosaurs wanted to race with the bunnies. So they decided to race in the forest. "One...two...three GO!" said the dinosaur and they went. But when they raced the smallest dinosaur got lost and they went to look for him, and the biggest dinosaur found the smallest dinosaur. But the Dinosaur was stuck. So they dinosaurs had a good idea, they went to get scissors but the scissors didn't work. All the dinosaurs pulled and pulled and finally got the dinosaur out. The dinosaur was really happy and they invited their friends.

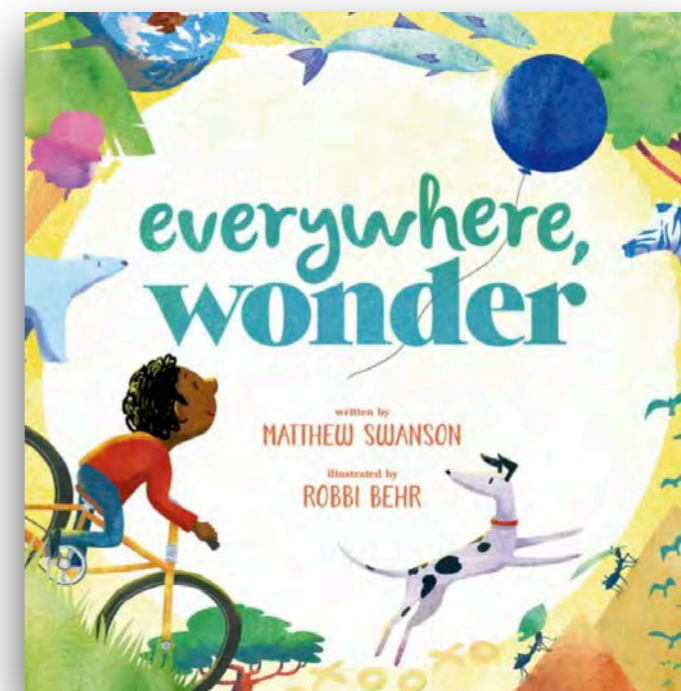
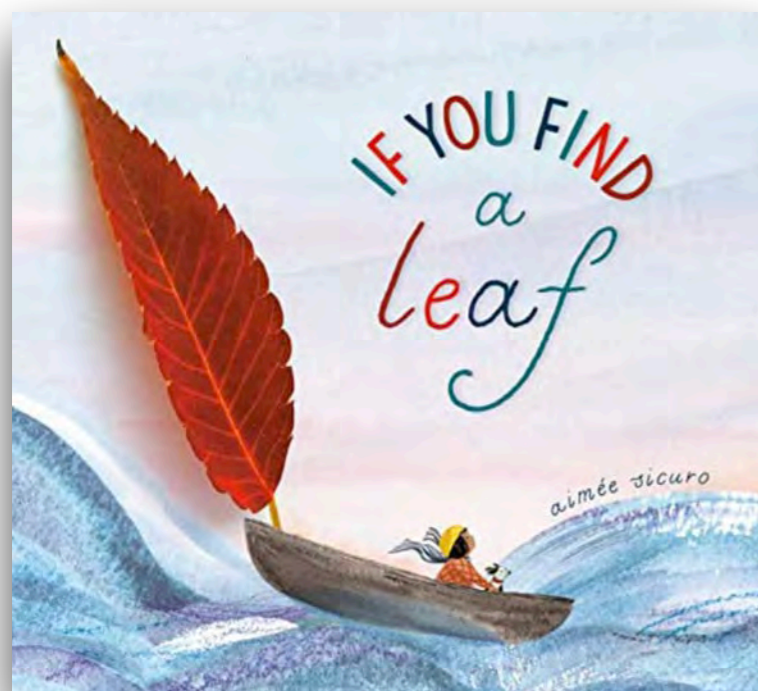
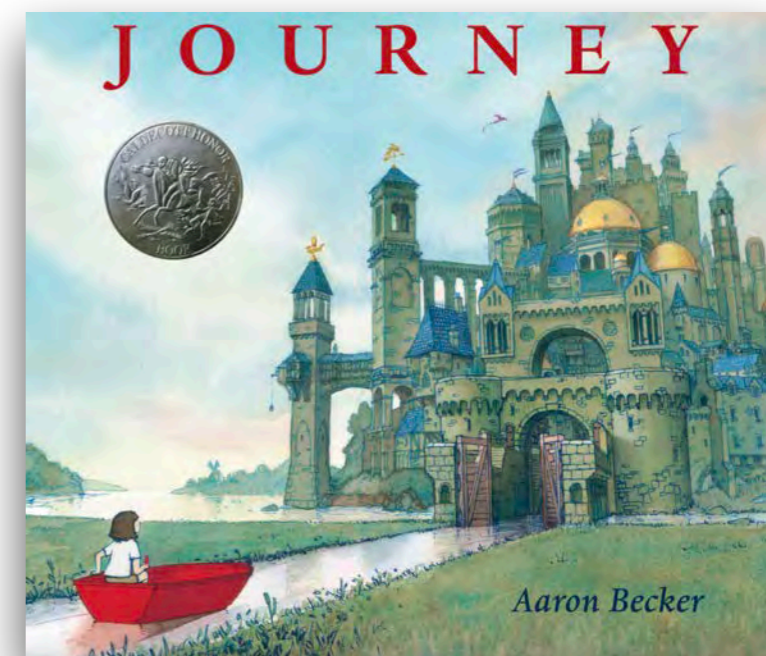
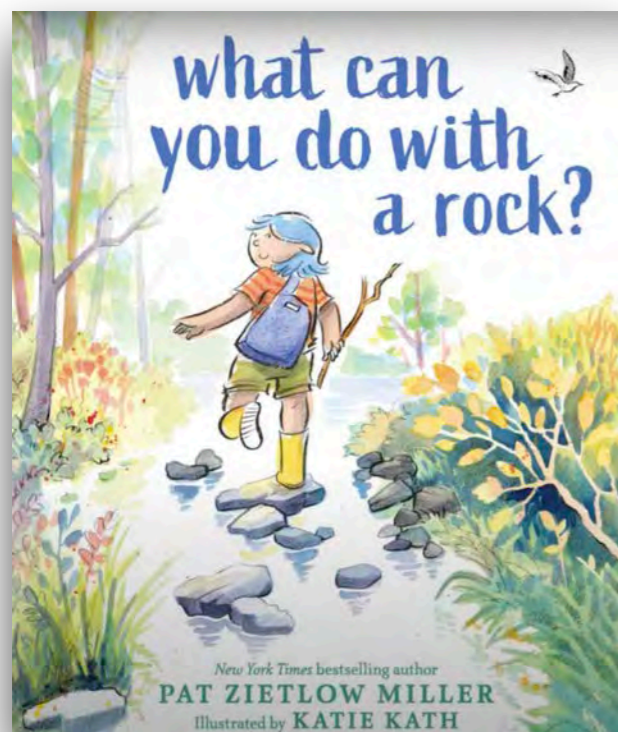
Engaging in story sharing by focusing on connection

It takes time to learn to listen deeply.

We can ask questions like:

- Who was reminded of their own story?
- What pictures did you make in your mind?
- What are you wondering?
- How did the story make you feel?
- Do you have any connections?
- What inspired you?
 - What does listening sound like, look like, and feel like?
 - How do you feel when someone listens to you?
 - What do you do when you get stuck?
 - Why do people tell stories?

Read alouds to launch story workshop



Reflect, Connect & Share

What are you noticing or wondering about, in relation to these five elements of story workshop?

1. Preparation
2. Provocation
3. Invitation & Negotiation
4. Story Creation
5. Story Sharing

Reflect on the information just shared and connect it with your own personal story workshop experiences, and share your thoughts, questions, ideas etc.

Supporting story workshop connections at home

Inspire

- read, view or listen to a book
- explore outside using your senses
- learn something new in science, socials, math or any subject
- remember an experience at school, at home, on holidays
- retell how to do something...

Create

- Using 'stuff' build a picture to explain your learning
- Move the stuff around to play out the story of your learning
- Play out the learning story one or more times adding stuff or using new stuff.
- Recreate the learning story with paints, pastels, crayons, clay, play-doh, sand, sidewalk chalk...

Share

- tell someone the story
- draw the story by copying what you have created
- label the drawing with letters and words
- write a sentence to summarize the story
- write out the whole story
- video record the story as you play it out

Why Story Workshop?

Story Workshop is the confluence of meaning-making, play, and the arts.



Students start to understand that they:

- * can be curious about the environment around them
- * are competent communicators
- * have important stories to tell
- * can make connections to other people's stories
- * have big emotions they can explore and share with others

Sources

Info Links

[BC Ministry of Education – ELA Curriculum](#)

[Opal School: Why Story Workshop?](#)

[BC Early Learning Framework](#)

[Invitations to Play – An Introduction to the Reggio Emilia Approach](#)

[Vancouver Reggio Association – Story Workshop in the Grade 1 Classroom](#)

[Sofia Feldmann SEL Check-ins](#)

[Opal School – Translating Ideas Between Different Materials](#)

[Delta Learns – Story Studio at Home](#)

[Habitat Conservation Trust Fund Education – FREE Downloads of Tree Cards](#)

Books

Story Workshop: New Possibilities for Young Writers – MacKay

Loose Parts: Inspiring Play in Young Children – Daly & Beloglovsky

Storytelling and Story-Reading in Early Years – Medicott

A Festive Thought: Visual Metaphor in Children's Learning Processes – Reggio Children Publishing

Videos

[Opal School Video – Setting the Table](#)

[Opal School: Children on Play & Learning](#)

[J Allair – Kindergarten Story Workshop inspired by Opal School](#)

[Rights of Children – North American Reggio Emilia Association \(NAREA\)](#)



Provincial Outreach Program for the Early Years



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The Values of the Reggio Emilia Approach

Children are active protagonists in their growing experience.

- Children are equipped with extraordinary potential
- Every child is a constructor of experiences

The hundred languages

- Children possess a hundred ways of thinking, expressing, understanding...

Participation

- The educational strategy that is constructed and lived in encounters and relations day after day

Learning as a process of construction

- Every child is the constructor of knowledge, competencies, and autonomies

Educational Research

- Priority is given to research between adults and children as an everyday practice, a necessary attitude for interpreting the world

The Values of the Reggio Emilia Approach

Educational documentation

- Documentation is an **integral part** of educational theories and practices and gives them **structure**
- It renders the nature of **learning processes** as **visible** and **invaluable**, and turns them into a **shared common legacy**

Design

- Educational **action** is shaped through the design of **teaching**, **environments**, **participation**, and the **professional growth** of educators

Organization

- The organization of **work**, of **spaces**, of **time**, are central structures that **support stability**, **continuity**, and a **sense of belonging**

Environment and Spaces

- Interior and exterior spaces are designed as **interconnected**, and are offered to children and adults as **places to live together and research**
- **Care** for these spaces creates **familiarity**, **belonging**, **safety**, **well-being**...